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ABSTRACT

This handbook documents the Prison Literacy Project (PLP) in order to provide a model for other community groups to follow in developing their own literacy projects. The PLP worked to have prison residents learn to read or significantly raise their reading levels through an ongoing literacy tutoring program. All project participants were involved in community partnership and empowerment through their personal interactions. Since 1984, more than 350 students have been tutored and 150 tutors have been trained in the Laubach method, a tutor support network has been developed, and two other literacy tutoring projects have been developed based on the PLP model. The handbook provides a history and philosophy of the project, organizational structure and opportunities for participation, and project objectives, with specific emphasis on their development. This second edition of the handbook reflects accomplishments and provides updates on the projects since 1984. Five appendixes to the report describe the results achieved, project techniques, timelines, volunteer tutor jobs, and the project video documentary. (KC)

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PREFACE

The purpose of the Prison Literacy Project Handbook is to record how the project was created, its development and growth, and its stumbling blocks and successes. This book is designed to be a source of information about the Prison Literacy Project (PLP) for the general public, the media, other literacy groups, and correctional institutions and related interests.

The first edition of the Handbook was published in 1985 and since then 1,400 copies have been distributed compliments of the PLP. This second edition of the Handbook reflects accomplishments since the project began in 1984 with appropriate updates as needed.

The goal of the Handbook is to provide a model for other community groups to follow in developing their own literacy projects. The intent of the PLP Handbook is to encourage and enable other community groups to develop their own projects successfully--regardless of specific objectives. The Handbook provides a history and philosophy of the project, organizational structure and opportunities for participation, and project objectives, with specific emphasis on their development.

The PLP Handbook is available to anyone who wants to have a positive effect on his or her community. Naturally, the content of the PLP focuses on literacy and prisons, and thus the Handbook is more relevant to groups specifically interested in generating programs to combat illiteracy in correctional institutions. However, the process the team followed in creating the PLP can be used by anyone and any group, whatever the focus of the project.

We will continue to make copies of the Handbook available to anyone with an interest in literacy and correctional education, at no charge, thanks to the printing of this revision by the ALCOM Printing Group. Their participation in the fight against illiteracy in general and in prisons in particular is most appreciated by the students, tutors, and managers of the PLP.

It is clear that the PLP could not have succeeded without the dedication of its managers inside and outside the prison walls. They reviewed the first edition of this Handbook and made important contributions to the second edition. The Handbook's marvelous cover was designed by Peter J. Volz, and the text was reviewed by Shelley Wilks Geehr and proofread by Richard Behr.

It has been a pleasure to serve as the communications co-manager of the PLP since its inception. I have been in touch with many hundreds of people through the outreach efforts of the PLP and am continuously inspired by the dedication and commitment of literacy tutors and students--on both sides of the prison wall. They are to whom this second edition is dedicated.

Joan H. Behr
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
January 1993

BACKGROUND

The Prison Literacy Project (PLP) is an offshoot of the Prison Project, Inc., which was formed in 1981 to end crime through effective and transformational programs. The PLP was originally proposed as a project called Literacy Lift Off by Mitchell Blatstein and Trish Mumme, members of the Prison Project at the Breakthrough Foundation Community Workshop that began in New York in April 1984.

The Community Workshop was a six-month program for 300-1,000 people who wanted to break through in their ability to take effective community action. This workshop, which met 12 times between April and September, was a program of the Breakthrough Foundation, a nonprofit organization providing a powerful, reliable, repeatable method of empowering people to take charge of their own lives and break through to self-reliance.

Blatstein, an academic tutor and vice president of the Prison Project, and Mumme, an educator and active member of the Prison Project, drafted a proposal for Literacy Lift Off and presented it to the Community Workshop. Twelve people from Philadelphia participating in the 1984 Community Workshop chose to pursue the original Literacy Lift Off project. With the partnership and endorsement of the Philadelphia Prison Project, Literacy Lift Off was renamed the Prison Literacy Project and became active in the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, a Pennsylvania maximum security prison, in September 1984.

PHILOSOPHY

The description of the PLP history and structure, which follows, tells how the project was formed and how it looks. However, it is important to know that what makes this project, or any other successful project, work is not its structure but the guiding principles behind the structure. The PLP has discovered that development of a successful community project involves having a vision of what is possible in the world. This often does not require knowing how to achieve that vision. For example, John F. Kennedy did not know how it would be done when he declared that we would put a man on the moon by 1970. Beginning with this declaration, NASA and the other agencies did what was needed to meet this objective.

The project team saw a need to align on a guiding vision for the project. Each of us has a personal vision of what he or she wants of life, society, people, and the world. As a team, we aligned on the vision that individuals inside and outside prisons are members of one and the same community. This vision serves as a beacon for the members of the PLP. It remains the same no matter what evolution the project goes through.

Note that the vision says "are" and not "will be." The power in this vision is that it is a declaration that starts right now. The PLP works within this vision not toward it. Our means of expressing the vision is the PLP.

Since a project is a convergence of vision and action, the team aligned on a purpose: to have prison residents learn to read or significantly raise their reading levels through an ongoing literacy tutoring program. All project participants will experience community partnership and empowerment through their personal interactions.

The second half of the purpose statement is pivotal to the PLP. The members of the project know that their purpose is much more than tutoring. If reading levels are raised, the PLP will have done only part of the job. The PLP will know it has really accomplished something when all participants--students, tutors, project administrators, prison staff, contributors, etc.--feel a greater sense of community partnership and when there is a shift in community attitudes about personal responsibility, literacy, and the criminal justice system.

VISION AND PURPOSE

To restate the guiding principles of the PLP:

Vision

Our vision is that individuals inside and outside prisons are members of one and the same community.

Purpose

The purpose is to have prison residents learn to read or significantly raise their reading level through an ongoing literacy tutoring program at the State Correctional Institution at Graterford (SCIG). All project participants will experience community partnership and empowerment through their personal interactions.

THE NEED

People who are "functionally illiterate" cannot read books, want ads, menus, bus signs, or letters from loved ones. A functional illiterate is defined as someone unable to read above the fourth grade level. Further investigation into the literacy/illiteracy problem reveals:

- 1 out of 5 U.S. citizens cannot read or write.
- 2 out of 5 adult Philadelphians cannot read or write.
- 3 out of 5 inmates at Graterford prison cannot read or write.

In 1985, there were 2,400 inmates at SCIG and its education department estimates that 1,400 are functionally illiterate. Today, in 1993, there are about 4,100 inmates at SCIG and those needing literacy tutoring number approximately 2,400. Within the literature, there is strong evidence that links recidivism and illiteracy. Clearly, there is a need for literacy programs to be established throughout this country.

The PLP feels it is a major step in opening the possibility of eliminating crime by giving a person alternatives through the ability to read and write. Moreover, the PLP provides an opportunity for participants to be in relationship with a variety of communities--students, tutors, sponsors, and team managers. Although our primary purpose is to teach inmates to read and write, the PLP also intends to bring forth a sense of partnership and community for all participants. The PLP provides a model that can be taken into communities at all levels--individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, and businesses.

PRISON SELECTION

One of the first tasks of the newly created project was to align on where to implement the project. While the Community Workshop was meeting every two weeks in New York City, the PLP members also were meeting in Philadelphia to discover what prison would be most receptive to a literacy tutoring program. The team researched several local prisons and chose in June 1984 to work with the State Correctional Institution at Graterford (SCIG) in Graterford, Pennsylvania.

Graterford was selected primarily because of a previous relationship among Mitchell Blatstein, Trish Mumme, and Joan Gauker, the volunteer coordinator of volunteer services at SCIG. All three are members of the Prison Project and had interacted about the need for one-on-one literacy tutoring for prison inmates. Moreover, the administration at Graterford is committed to its treatment program which involves education and respect for the humanness of the inmates. In addition to location and the basically stable nature of the inmate population, Graterford has a well-functioning school that specializes in developing vocational skills and preparing residents to qualify for general education development degrees. Some literacy tutoring was underway at SCIG, but the facility lacked a structured volunteer program to combat the high illiteracy rate among residents.

The PLP immediately received the full support of the coordinator of volunteer services, the principal of the prison school, the prison superintendent, and the deputy superintendent for treatment. Members of the Graterford Student Council became excited about the PLP and looked at ways to share in the responsibility for the project's success. A great many of those inmates joined the PLP as co-managers with external members. From that time on, all project decisions were made with the combined input of inmates (internal) and outside (external) team members.

CONDITIONING QUESTIONS

Now, the PLP had a name, a prison with which to work, a vision and purpose, and committed participants. Before we moved on, we spent a good deal of time answering the following conditioning questions,* which can apply to any endeavor or project. "The way to initiate this process is to have your project group address the following questions: what are the questions, the answers to which will empower our group to have our project be successful and make a difference in the community?"

1. What are the purpose and intended results?
2. What skills and resources are required and available?
3. Who else is working on it and what is being done now? How will we relate to others now working on this project?
4. Who knows useful things about this project or issue? How will we get that information? What do we need to know now?
5. How will we measure the results?
6. What are the major areas or divisions of work that need to be managed on this project?
7. What basic systems do we need for operating?
8. What budget is needed and where will the money come from?
9. What meeting place, logistics, material, documentation, and administration are needed, and how will we provide them?
10. Who needs to be informed or communicated to, about what, and how will we reach them?
11. How do we keep track of who is doing what on the project, and how do we support them?
12. How do we clear ourselves and stay clear on the purpose of this project? How do we keep the inspiration and meaning in the project?
13. What steps need to be taken now, and who will do them?
14. How will we manage the results and relationships that will be produced after the project is completed?
15. What should the people who participate in this project get out of it, and how will we see to it that they do?

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INTENDED RESULTS

The PLP defines a result as an objectively measurable outcome of an action or operation. It is a specific consequence of one's effort. Results are goals that are measurable and have a timeline. The power in this definition comes from the fact that individuals and teams can make promises to be responsible for getting a particular portion of the job done and when.

The following PLP intended results were delineated early in the project's development. Please note that specific dates were chosen as deadlines because it was the culmination of the Community Workshop. Some of the results were achieved on schedule and some were not. Regardless of meeting deadlines, the PLP was energized and inspired by the process of aligning on targets. See Appendix A for a list of results achieved to date.

1. 40 nonresidents will be trained as tutors.	20 by 7/28/84 20 by 9/01
2. 40 nonresidents will be tutoring 40 students at Graterford.	9/18
3. 40 residents will be trained as tutors.	9/18
4. 40 residents will be tutoring students at Graterford.	9/18
5. A Literacy Council will be established at Graterford.	9/18
6. A community outreach program designed to reach the prison, the general public, and other community groups will be operating.	9/18
7. 100% of first 80 students complete one "term" of tutoring. Evaluation shows that 100% have moved up at least one grade level.	3/4/85
8. 80 sponsors will financially support 80 student-tutor pairs at the rate of $25 per pair.	8/21
9. We will raise an additional $1,500 to cover costs other than educational materials.	500 by 8/1 Balance by 9/18

INTENDED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The PLP discovered that it is sometimes possible to achieve intended results and still not feel satisfied. The PLP defines an accomplishment as a goal that each person decides in the heart whether his or her vision of the project is being achieved.

An accomplishment may be measurable in some part but is usually subjective in its evaluation. It also implies a successful completion of a purpose or aim. Accomplishments provide satisfaction, often are not measurable, and may not fit into a timeline. Following are the original intended accomplishments set forth at the outset of the project. (See page 22 for a revised set of objectives, drafted in November 1984.)

1. The students and tutors will feel they are capable, powerful, and able people.
2. ALL participants will feel they are part of the same community because the PLP exists.
3. Students will finish their six-month course and enroll in another course
4. Tutors will finish their six-month tutoring and ask to tutor another course.
5. ALL residents will see the opportunity and be motivated to further their education.
6. Residents who are not currently participating in the PLP will ask to be students or tutors.
7. Nonresidents who are not currently participating in the PLP will ask to participate.
8. Participants will take action to expand the scope of the PLP.
9. There will be visible awareness in the community-at-large of the PLP.
10. Other communities will be inspired to have prison literacy projects.

TECHNIQUES

Once we had our targets set down, the PLP utilized techniques learned at the Community Workshop to define what was needed by whom and by when. Each person who managed an area (see next section) set forth objectives and team goals. The group as a whole used a "Cards Process" to plan, design, and define the project.

This process involves listing every step that must be taken to reach the stated goals. The process provides a comprehensive task list and assigns priorities to the specific activities necessary to get the results desired. See Appendix B for a complete description of the Cards Process.

The PLP also established a Timeline--a comprehensive overview of what was involved in creating our project so that everything that needed to be done was presented clearly and in chronological order. See Appendix C for a full description of the Timelines Process.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

One unique feature of the PLP is co-management with Graterford residents. In every management area, there are both internal and external managers. The internal and external managers have independent meetings, and at least once a month both groups meet together.

In addition to a project director (internal and external), six areas were originally defined and managers volunteered: communications, finance, integrity and well-being, logistics, outreach, and tutors. The PLP structure is ever-changing. It adapts to support the work that needs to be done to reach the intended results and accomplishments.

The original six areas expanded into nine and include project management, communications, administration of tutors, integrity and well-being, logistics, tutor training/student enrollment, finance, community outreach, and operations. Over the past eight years, the job titles shifted in response to what needed to be done.

Over the years, a number of managers--both inside and outside prison--have left the PLP. In 1993, there are just 4 external managers and approximately 10 internal managers, and they have focused on project direction, administration of tutors, communications, community outreach, and special projects. From time to time, additional managers have handled specific outreach efforts such as a video documentary, newsletters, and other publications. Clearly, enrolling members for the management team is a difficult task; the PLP has found it easier to recruit tutors than additional managers.

TEAM EXPLANATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Each project area can be described further in terms of team explanations, job descriptions, and participation opportunities. After a brief description of the Project Co-Director, the areas are presented alphabetically.

Project Co-Director

Responsible and accountable for continually generating the vision, purpose, intended results, and accomplishments of the project. Responsible and accountable for coordinating, empowering, and managing the other managers so that the goals and results of the project are produced.

Internal co-director coordinates the various departments and activities of the Graterford Literacy Council and arranges the administrative clearance for external PLP participants to enter the institution.

Represents the project and its goals with other agencies, groups, and the media.

Sets agendas and chairs meetings.

Participation Opportunities:

Support and assist the co-directors in any of the above tasks.

Administrator of Tutors

Purpose: To communicate with tutors and oversee all administrative matters relating to their job.

Manager:

Speaks to anyone interested in tutoring, answers questions, informs potential tutors about project, meetings, and training.

Develops a record-keeping system to track tutoring attendance and maintains up-to-date list of tutors and prospective tutors.

Coordinates with Logistics Manager in scheduling tutors; notifies all students and tutors of any cancellations of tutoring sessions.

Administers two levels of the Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) tests to determine reading and writing levels of prospective students.

Participates in developing objective criteria for matching tutors and students.

Participation Opportunities:

Phoners, represent external manager in attending and reporting at meetings.

Community Outreach

Purpose: To achieve a visible awareness of the PLP inside and outside prison and have the PLP become a part of everyone's community.

Manager:

Responsible for recruiting internal volunteers to serve as tutors, administrative assistants, and team members.

Communicates the needs, desires, and progress of the PLP to the appropriate individuals.

Develops and propagates a positive image and philosophy consistent with the aims and goals of the project.

Manages and supervises various aspects of community outreach including contact with the media, community groups, and communication within the prison.

Oversees and supports the following areas:

Media Communications contacts media with press releases, meeting dates, and event announcements. Sets up appearances and interviews with community affairs, radio, and TV shows.

Documentary produces a video on the progress of the PLP to inform the public, solicit funds, expand the scope of the project.

Newsletter writes and produces periodic publication for all PLP participants to communicate and exchange ideas, maintain contact, and provide an outlet for creative writing.

Publishing produces and distributes necessary literature including brochure, this Handbook, and two volumes of Inside Out: Writings from the Prison Literacy Project.

Political Lobby contacts state, local, and federal government officials to present PLP and gain endorsement for initiating literacy projects in all U.S. institutions.

Participation Opportunities:

Writers, journalists, photographers, phoners, and volunteers to work on all teams listed.

Communications

Purpose: To keep all participants of the PLP informed of events, results, and all necessary information.

Manager:

Ensures that all PLP members are in touch with each other and informed about PLP affairs. Ensures all members are informed of meeting dates and times.

Manages the recording, transcription, and dissemination of minutes of all meetings. Maintains a central file of minutes and correspondence.

Manages the creation, maintenance, and distribution of accurate team list.

External manager coordinates with phone terminal manager to disseminate PLP information.

Participation Opportunities:

Phoners, represent manager at meetings, take minutes at meetings.

Finance

Purpose: To raise all necessary funds in a way that allows people to participate in community and experience themselves as making a difference in accomplishing the PLP vision.

Manager:

Oversees all monies--project accounting system and contribution program.

Responsible for fund-raising--to raise as much money as needed to serve the project's purposes. Manages event team for fund-raisers.

Responsible for budget--to account for and distribute project funds as needed.

Manages accounting system to record money in and out. Ensures all financial transactions are recorded.

Manages sponsor/contributor support team so that sponsors and contributors keep their promises and are appropriately acknowledged.

Supports grant-writing team.

Participation Opportunities:

Manage any of the following teams: fund-raising, accounts, sponsor support, special events. Membership in any of the teams listed.

Integrity & Well-Being

Purpose: To keep individuals and team in touch with the vision and overall purpose of the project by being vigilant of the group's integrity and well-being.

Manager:

Accountable for knowing the commitments of the team.

Support the group and individuals in keeping their promises.

Receives and delivers communications about what has and has not been accomplished.

Acknowledges individual and group accomplishments.

Participation Opportunities:

Phoners, recording promises made.

Logistics

Purpose: To handle all physical arrangements of project.

Manager:

Secures meeting places and sees that all necessary equipment is set up and available for use at open meetings, tutor trainings, and team meetings.

Schedules classroom space in prison; prepares monthly schedule of tutors for prison.

Procures supplies, stores, receives, and maintains all tutoring materials, keeps records of their disbursement.

Schedules prison orientation meetings for volunteers.

Arranges transportation for tutors through carpools or public and private transportation services.

Confirms attendance lists at orientations and tutoring sessions. Arranges security clearance for tutors and team members.

Participation Opportunities:

Phoners, assist in scheduling, represent manager at various events.

Operations

Purpose: To coordinate between Project Director and all teams.

Manager:

Maintains high visibility and communication within prison.

Communicates what is needed to appropriate team and implements systems to get work done.

Continues to look at how to take the PLP to the next level of growth and effectiveness.

Recommends changes in organizational structure and job responsibilities to assure smooth flow of operations and accuracy of assignments.

Participation Opportunities:

Assist manager in accomplishing previously listed duties.

Tutor Management

Purpose: To oversee and coordinate all matters relating to tutors.

Manager:

Supervises tutor administrators and tutor support managers.

Coordinates with scheduling, enrollment, training, and student managers.

Participation Opportunities:

Tutors, participate in enrollment, training, scheduling, administration, or support.

Tutor Training/Student Enrollment

Purpose: To train tutors and enroll students.

Manager:

Responsible for training volunteer tutors in all areas of literacy instruction.

Responsible for interviewing, evaluating, and testing potential students to determine their initial grade level.

Develops enrollment plan sensitive to the unique prison environment through protecting the confidentiality and integrity of all residents.

Responsible for matching student-tutor pairs; reviews their progress.

Participation Opportunities:

Assist at tutor trainings--logistics, teaching, supplies; assist manager as directed.

Tutor Support

Purpose: To acknowledge, empower, and support the tutors as individuals and as a team. To foster new possibilities for the tutors to take into their tutoring.

Manager:

Responsible for tutors' awareness of prison rules and educating tutors of possible inmate requests.

Organize meetings that provide tutors with a clearing for sharing their experience. Present guest speakers and programs to address tutors' concerns. Responsible for arranging meeting places, notifying tutors, ensuring minutes are taken and distributed.

Ensures that a communication system is available for all tutors so that feedback is immediate and easy.

Sets up tutor support systems that are available ongoingly.

Participation Opportunities:

Phoners, logistics, programs coordinator, minute takers.

ENROLLMENT

An invaluable asset to the PLP is the tutor training resources of the Center for Literacy (CFL) in Philadelphia. Without the availability of the CFL, our tutoring program could not have begun. We use the CFL's 10-hour tutor training for external volunteers, as well as training by the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, the Lutheran Settlement House, and the Literacy Council of Norristown. It is essential to have tutors specially trained to work with illiterate adults, although there are no specific requirements for becoming a literacy tutor. See Appendix D for a job description of a volunteer tutor.

The PLP also sponsors tutor trainings at SCIG to train inmate volunteer tutors. In addition, we established a tutor support network and provide specific orientation for working with prison inmates. Graterford also provides a general orientation on volunteering within the facility.

In addition to recruiting tutors, specific team members, financial contributors, and students had to be enrolled in order for the PLP to succeed. Each manager was responsible for filling his or her team, and we held public meetings to attract new participants. The following outline* is helpful in enrolling someone's participation--regardless of the project.

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Give the name of your project.
3. State the vision of your project (take a stand on the difference that your project will make; say where and for whom).
4. Give information on your project.
5. Say what's required for people to participate (time, skills, etc.). Say what it takes (commitment, integrity, responsibility, taking a stand).
6. State what your promises are with regard to people who participate (why should they participate). Let them know that participating is an opportunity to make a difference.
7. Have a conversation for action. Make an invitation or request for people to make a promise to participate.
8. Get the necessary information from the people who enroll; give them the information they need.
9. Acknowledge and validate people's choice.

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BUDGET & FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

The PLP established an initial fund-raising target of $2,000 to sponsor 80 student/tutor pairs at $25 per pair and $15,000 for publicity, public relations, newsletters, and other educational and administrative expenses. Since the project's inception, the goals have expanded to make the program available nationally. Grant monies were requested, and a detailed budget, including staff expense and overhead, was prepared for the grant proposals.

However, for purposes of this Handbook, the budget items listed reflect only expense items. Moreover, no dollar amounts are included since they vary depending on location and inflation. In addition, each project needs to define for itself how much volunteer time and services it can count on and how to secure administrative services beyond those donated.

Budget

The following items were included in the original PLP budget:

Teaching materials - books and teaching module (to train tutors).
Administrative services - typing supplies, postage, photocopying.
Equipment - tape recorder, computer.
Meeting expenses - room rental.
Publicity - news releases, public service announcements, flyers.
Print materials - newsletter, brochure, Handbook.
Documentary - equipment, videotape, etc.

The internal managers also devised a budget. The general categories included are:

Office equipment
Office supplies
Staff expense - supplies
Promotion costs
General expenses - transportation, postage, and miscellaneous.

Fund-Raising

The initial fund-raising effort focused on raising money for educational supplies. For this, a special category of contributors called "sponsors" was created. A sponsor is defined by the PLP as someone who contributes $25 and is willing to be linked with a specific student-tutor pair. The $25 per pair would provide the books and materials necessary for six months of tutoring. The student and sponsor would be in relationship through correspondence that would assist the student's learning process and provide the sponsor with a sense of contribution beyond his or her $25 donation. The goal of sponsorship, in addition to raising money, is to include as many people in the community in the project.

To provide ongoing income, the PLP created another category of contribution called "financial family." A member would contribute the same amount of money each month. Another source of income is special events.

The PLP has managed to raise the funds it needs through general appeals to the newsletter mailing list, individual solicitations, and specific requests to foundations and organizations. The PLP has generated almost all its funds in contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations. This money has been used to support ongoing tutoring efforts as well as for very specific purposes: to produce a 26-minute video documentary, publish a periodic newsletter with a 500-person mailing list, print this revision of the Handbook, and publish two volumes of writings from students, tutors, and managers of the PLP.

Grant-writing is an art as well as a skill and having an experienced fund-raiser on the management team of any project would be an invaluable asset. The PLP has been fortunate in having a communications manager who has been willing to--and successful in--raising specific funds to support the publishing efforts of the project.

Accounting System

Nonprofit organizations generally have tax-exempt status. The PLP, as an offshoot of the Prison Project, Inc., qualified as tax exempt under the Prison Project. As the contributions began to come in, it became increasingly difficult to recruit a volunteer treasurer and bookkeeper. The PLP also found it difficult to provide the kind of record-keeping necessary to fulfill Prison Project objectives. Therefore, in November 1984, the PLP affiliated with Resources for Human Development, a nonprofit corporation committed to supporting individuals and groups working on projects in the community. This association does not affect the integrity or independence of the PLP and provides the project with much needed administrative and audited accounting support. And tax-exempt status remains intact, as part of Resources for Human Development. The PLP pays to RHD 14% of each check it writes.

The PLP accounting system keeps track of more than money coming in and money going out. A pledge system was initiated to facilitate raising money. Again, the intent was to allow full participation because people could create their own deadlines for their contributions. Caution is needed in this area. A strong support system is needed for people to keep their word and actually contribute the money pledged. Therefore, the PLP accounting system tracks the following items:

Money coming in - cash and pledges

Money spent

Cash on hand

Total number of contributors (broken out as sponsors and nonsponsors)

Where the money comes from--events, donations

CONCLUSION

The PLP has become a viable, self-sustaining group of residents and nonresidents working together to maintain and nurture a literacy tutoring program at Graterford. Our intention is to provide a model and resources on which other community groups may draw--whatever their focus.

At the culmination of the Community Workshop in September, 1984, external project members reviewed the original objectives and aligned on a new set of goals. Needless to say, the goals of the PLP continue to expand to include opportunities and possibilities of our ever-enlarging sense of community. The revised objectives, as of this writing, are worth noting. The internal PLP managers also set down goal projections, and they follow beginning with No. 15. Although these objectives overlap and compliment each other, they are presented separately only because they were developed at different times.

1. To maintain and expand our partnership with the residents and staff in the Graterford PLP and the national PLP program.

2. Develop our own tutor training program so that it trains new tutors and supports existing tutors on a regular basis. This includes recruiting and/or training people to be qualified tutor trainers--at least two inmates and two outside volunteers.

3. Support a follow-up program for PLP participants after their release from prison. The purpose of this objective is to enable inmates and all project participants to be the leadership in attacking illiteracy only in prison but also in the neighborhoods from which they come.

4. Support communities to recognize PLP participants as positive, constructive members.

5. To be continually sensitive to the need for other programs in addition to literacy tutoring and writing workshops.

6. Assist in developing and implementing other literacy projects, as well as establishing a network of related projects such as writing workshops, re-entry support, pen pals, etc.

7. Continue to establish communitywide awareness and involvement on a volunteer basis.

8. Maintain a PLP organizational structure that facilitates development of literacy projects nationally, which includes paid staff.

9. Look at the possibility of establishing an advisory board of experts - literacy specialists, prison inmates, technical writers, financial advisors, social service representatives, etc.

10. Produce and distribute a brochure to increase community awareness and invite participation.

11. Publish a newsletter to update the community on PLP activities.

12. Produce a documentary (video) and PLP Handbook about the PLP.

13. Have the PLP ever-present in the media.

14. Continue to raise necessary funds through private contributors, corporate funding, federal grants, and other avenues.

15. To eradicate illiteracy in prisons through active community and inmate participation in literacy tutoring.

16. To channel the graduates from the literacy project into the existing educational programs in the prisons (A.B.E., G.E.D., and vocational courses).

17. To help upgrade existing educational programs in the prisons as an outgrowth of the project.

18. To generate local community and political support for the fight against illiteracy in the prisons and in the communities from which the offenders come.

19. To use the Graterford Prison Literacy Project as the model for literacy projects in the various prisons throughout the U.S.

20. To establish the "oneness" of society where inmates and the community at large can work together to eradicate a social problem - illiteracy - which has become epidemic in its scope.

21. To empower the inmate community to become socially responsible by participating in a cooperative effort with "free" persons in the community to combat a social problem. To empower the inmate community to be a catalyst for effective change in the communities from which they come.

22. To curb the tide of recidivism by equipping inmates with the basic tools to function in an educational environment.

Appendix A: Results Achieved to Date (January 1993)

The PLP has created a literacy tutoring program at SCIG that can be a prototype for similar programs in other institutions. From the intended results set in 1984, we have achieved the following:

Tutoring:

The PLP met with the inmate student council, the principal of the prison school, members of the administration, and coordinator of volunteer services. The PLP vision and purpose and SCIG needs were discussed and all participants aligned on common goals.

Currently, there are 47 student-tutor pairs at work at SCIG.

Since 1984, more than 350 students have been tutored, and 150 tutors (both inside and outside prison) have been trained. PLP tutors have been trained in the Laubauch method under the auspices of the Mayor's (Philadelphia) Commission of Literacy, the Center for Literacy, the Literacy Council of Norristown, and the Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program.

A tutor support network exists, and there have been tutor support meetings, periodically, both inside and outside prison. Each June, the PLP holds an acknowledgement event at Graterford to recognize the efforts of that year's students and tutors; certificates of merit and certificates of service are distributed to both students and tutors, and a tutor of the year is honored. This event is both an inspiration for and a celebration of the PLP's accomplishments.

Two other literacy tutoring projects are based on the PLP model: Trenton State Prison began its Learning Is For Everyone project in 1985 and earned a presidential "Thousand Points of Light" award; PLP West started in 1991 at the Three Rivers, Texas, federal correctional facility to which one of the original internal PLP managers had been transferred.

Outreach:

An active community outreach and public relations program has been established. Articles have been published in local newspapers, and press releases have appeared throughout the Delaware Valley press. Several members of the PLP have appeared on a number of TV shows and been interviewed on a variety of radio programs.

Each September (Adult Literacy Month) for the past several years, a public service announcement has been written and sent to the media throughout the Delaware Valley. This effort results in more than 50 calls to the PLP each year.

The Philadelphia Publishers Group bestowed its 1992 Literacy Award on the PLP.

Publications:

A brochure to describe the project and recruit volunteers and financial contributors was printed in spring 1985 and is sent on request and with all PLP information packets.

The PLP Newsletter was established and 20 issues have been produced. The Newsletter is mailed to approximately 500 persons and contains articles of interest to those involved with literacy and correctional institutions as well as creative writing and artwork.

This Handbook was written and printed in February 1985; it was reprinted twice and this revision produced in January 1993.

Inside Out: Writings from the Prison Literacy Project was published in September 1991. For incarcerated new readers, two volumes contain poems, short stories, and short essays that deal with subjects of interest to prison residents. To help the new reader, easier-to-read pieces are presented in the first volume. One purpose of the books is to inspire beginning incarcerated readers to continue on the literacy path and perhaps begin to write stories of their own. Since publication, more than 500 copies have been distributed, at no charge, to each state department of education and department of correction and relevant literacy and correctional organizations.

Documentaries:

An Emmy-nominated video documentary, "The Prison Literacy Project," was written and produced by PLP participants. Aired on a number of Delaware Valley TV stations and distributed throughout the country, the video is available for rent or purchase from Kinetics Inc., Buffalo, N.Y.; Toronto, Canada; and Sydney, Australia. See Appendix E for more information about the video's content and production.

New interviews were filmed and the video expanded to include updated PLP results. This version of the documentary was produced by Robert Morris College in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, for its Encore Series and has been aired on a number of Pennsylvania educational cable TV stations.

Another video about the PLP is underway and should be finished by the end of 1993.

Financial:

Accounting and financial services are provided by Resources for Human Development (RHD), a diversified, nonprofit corporation that sponsors human service programs throughout the greater Philadelphia area. RHD provides a centralized, independently audited accounting system that handles all expenses and income, from both sales and contributions, for the PLP. The PLP qualifies for 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status because of its association with RHD.

The PLP is funded by sales of its video and books and contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, and other nonprofit organizations. Money and denoted services have been contributed to fund the Prison Literacy Project's video documentary (see Appendix E), various issues of the Newsletter, a brochure, Inside Out: Writings from The Prison Literacy Project, and this Handbook.

The PLP is particularly appreciative of the financial support it has received from ALCOM Printing Group, B.D. Drayton, Ben & Jerry's Foundation, Bread & Roses, Catherwood Foundation, Chace Fund Committee, Community College of Philadelphia TV Production Unit, Gable Communications, George H. Buchanan, Hatfield Packing Co., IBM, Kelshawn Printing, Lukens Foundation, Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Philadelphia Book Clinic, Philadelphia Foundation, Philadelphia Publishers Group, Nelson Wire Rope Co., Thomas Skelton Harrison Foundation, Warner Amex, Western Association of Ladies for the Relief and Employment of the Poor, and its many, many individual contributors.

Miscellaneous:

A Creative Writing Workshop was devised by Mark Wangberg in July 1984. The workshop had 20 students and 5 nonresident instructors in such subjects as poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and journalism. A management team of five nonresident instructors and five resident writers was developed, and resident writing appeared in Graterfriends, the PLP Newsletter, and was heard in an interview on WFIL radio in Philadelphia. With the assistance of Montgomery County Community College, the workshop offered certificates of achievement to participants. In March 1985, the Creative Writing Workshop became separate from the PLP.

Appendix B: The Cards Process*

Purpose: The cards process is a procedure that can be used to plan, design, and condition a project or event. It provides a comprehensive task list and priorities for specific activities necessary to get the result desired.

Procedure:

1. Assemble the key people who will be involved in the project you are planning. Set aside at least two hours for your meeting.

2. Have the planning group brainstorm to come up with a very specific vision or picture of exactly what your project will be like when it is completed. In other words, if it all came out exactly as you want, what would have been achieved, how will people feel, what will it look like?

   Everyone in your planning group should participate.

   Make your envisioned result very specific and as grand as you like.

3. For supplies, you need about 100 3X5 cards and pencils or pens.

   Now, with a picture of your end result clearly in mind, your whole group can begin to list all the things that need to be done. All the supplies and equipment that need to be obtained, all the people who need to be informed and contacted, etc. should be listed.

   Each activity or item should be written on a separate 3X5 card. Don't spend a lot of time trying to decide if you really need something. If you think you might need it, write it down. There will be time later to eliminate unnecessary items.

4. When you have completed a card for all the items and activities necessary to achieve the intended result, take the cards and sort them into the approximate time sequence in which they need to be done. In other words, sort them into a priority list by time. It will be obvious that some activities need to begin immediately and others can be done later on.

5. Then, sort the cards into major areas of activity so that these activities can be assigned to the appropriate person on your team, e.g., logistics, enrollment, administration, etc. These sets of cards then form the "to do" list for each area manager.

6. At this point, you may choose to make a more formal timeline document or simply work from the cards.

7. If needed, the process can be repeated several times during the course of the project.

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Appendix C: Timelines*

Purpose: The timeline provides a comprehensive overview of what is involved in creating a specific event or project, so that everything that needs to be done is presented clearly and in chronological order. It is an opportunity to come from vision while developing a concrete, specific progression of tasks to complete.

Procedure:

1. Assemble the key people who will be involved in the project or event. Set aside at least two hours for your meeting.

2. For supplies you will need a large piece of butcher paper (at least 2X3 feet) and a marking pen.

3. Have the planning group brainstorm to come up with a very specific vision of exactly what the project will look like when completed. If it all came out exactly as you want, what will have been achieved, how will people feel, what will it look like?

   For example, if the result is an urban community garden, begin by envisioning the garden with its plots. Notice how many there are, the height of the fences, and signs that are around, the number and location of water spigots and hoses, compost piles, etc.

4. Now, given that end result you want to produce, what earlier results (and when) are needed to produce the end result? And what result is needed before that? Continue in this way, working backward. Use your vision of the project to guide you.

   For example, if the result is an urban community garden, what results are needed to produce a community garden? When are those results needed? And what results are needed before they can be produced? Be very specific, so that real action can come out of the timeline. And be very honest. Allow yourself enough time to complete each task.

   Two ways to think through the process:

   If the project will be completed on the 14th, what results need to be produced on the 13th? Move backward in discrete blocks of time; they may be large blocks at the beginning of the project and get smaller as the completion date nears. Move backward in parallel sequences of events. Land is needed; what needs to be done to make land available? Workers are needed; what needs to be done? Follow each sequence backward as far as it leads.

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There will be natural anchor points or milestones along the way, which are valuable for organizing and getting a handle on the work that needs to be done.

5. Work backward until you reach the point at which every result that needs to be produced first can be produced from where you are now.

6. Do a display of the timeline that is clear enough so the entire plan can be seen at once.

7. Look at the project as a whole. Have you allowed enough time to produce everything that needs to be produced? Is everything in the correct sequence? The timeline may need to be adjusted during the course of creating the project.

8. Now, work forward through the timeline, specifying the steps of the project in action terms, and giving everyone in the group the opportunity to commit and declare him or herself in producing the results. The various results needed can be sorted into major areas of activity so each person can be responsible for an area.

9. The timeline can be reproduced graphically so all the information is clear and so time is represented accurately.

Appendix D: Volunteer Tutor Job Description

The following job description was created by the Center for Literacy in Philadelphia. Naturally, for tutoring residents in a correction facility, appropriate adjustments must be made. Nevertheless, the basic job is well defined.

Purpose: To help an individual learn to read and write through one-to-one instruction, emphasizing personal attention.

Training: A basic 10-hour workshop, tutor meetings, individual consultation with certified teacher.

Hours: After the 10-hour training workshop, the volunteer, reading tutor and student should meet twice a week for 1 1/2 hours each session minimum. Allow enough time between lessons for independent work by the student.

Duration of Job: A commitment of six (6) months of tutoring. At the end of that time, you and the tutor support manager can meet to discuss extending your commitment and/or service.

Duties: As a tutor, you should:

1. Provide encouragement and support by:

    a) Helping student develop a positive self-concept and self-worth by complimenting him on his thinking, lesson, and work done independently.
    b) Encouraging your student's increased, and eventually, total independence from you.
    c) Showing acceptance of student by listening to what he has to say and demonstrating personal concern.
    d) Helping student develop positive attitudes toward learning by giving him praise when he has done well.
    e) Encouraging student to work on challenging materials as a positive opportunity for growth.
    f) Understanding reasons why student is having trouble learning to read.
    g) Meeting regularly and punctually.

2. Give student lessons designed just for him.

3. Review with student the work he has done independently.

4. Submit a monthly record of student's progress and attendance.

5. Attend tutor meetings.

Volunteer Qualifications: Dependable and prompt, interested in others and able to relate to them, compatible to their needs, respectful of confidentiality, literate (professional training unnecessary), flexible, friendly, patient, and optimistic. Sense of humor is helpful. Ability to be happy with small successes.

Fringe Benefits: Working with dedicated volunteers, heightened perception of the world around you, deepened understanding of values and lifestyles different from your own, and broadened imagination for creative problem-solving. Experience in adult education, reading instruction, and counseling. Work performance evaluations and references provided on request.

Appendix E: The Prison Literacy Project Video Documentary

In June 1985, experienced filmmakers from New Liberty Productions, Philadelphia, decided to make a video documentary about the PLP. The video would be used as a fund-raising, educational, and recruitment tool for community groups, prisons, literacy organizations, and any other interested parties. The video was budgeted at approximately $43,000, with roughly $25,000 in donated services: production personnel, music composition, equipment, editing, and studio recording time and facilities. The remaining $18,000 was raised through personal solicitations, phonathons, and grant requests.

The PLP story is graphically told in three phases. The first segment illuminates the invisibility and implications of illiteracy, as the camera moves from the streets and courtrooms of Philadelphia to Graterford prison in rural Pennsylvania.

The second segment attempts to break down the stereotypes, to humanize the prison and its inmates, and to depict the realities of prison life and illiteracy. Interviews with PLP managers, tutors, and students document the affect of the project.

The third phase of the video completes the journey from prison back to the community. The documentary creates an awareness of the PLP's vision that individuals inside and outside prisons are members of one and the same community.

The video was nominated for a local Emmy and was a finalist in both the New York International and the American Film and Video festivals. It is a broadcast-quality, 26-minute documentary that has been aired on a number of stations in the Delaware Valley.

The PLP video is available for rent or purchase from Kinetics, Inc., 255 Delaware Avenue, Suite 340, Buffalo, NY 14202 (716) 856-7631.

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